

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A filter system comprising:
a channel through which fluid passes;
a source of clean filter media adjacent the channel; and
a repository for used filter media adjacent the channel, wherein clean filter media travels from the source through the channel to collect a contaminant, and wherein the filter media travels from the channel to the repository.
2. The filter system of claim 1 wherein the filter media is a plurality of filter media cartridges, each of the plurality of cartridges stored in the source when new and stored in the repository when used.
3. The filter system of claim 2 wherein the source initially contains the plurality of filter media cartridges and wherein the repository ultimately contains the plurality of filter media cartridges.
4. The filter system of claim 3 wherein a subset of the plurality of filter cartridges is in the channel at any given moment.
5. The filter system of claim 1 wherein the filter media is in the form of a continuous elongated strip, only a portion of which is in the channel at any given time.

6. The filter system of claim 5 wherein the filter media is initially rolled inside the source, is subsequently unrolled into the channel and ultimately rolled into the repository.

7. The filter system of claim 1 further including a controller controlling the travel of the filter media from the source, to the channel and to the repository.

8. The filter system of claim 7 wherein the travel depends upon time.

9. The filter system of claim 7 wherein the travel depends upon a condition of the filter media in the channel.

10. The filter system of claim 9 wherein the travel depends on a level of contaminant in the filter media.

11. The filter system of claim 10 further including at least one pressure sensor for measuring a pressure drop across the filter media in the channel, the travel based upon the pressure drop.

12. The filter system of claim 1 further including a dispenser for dispensing a material for treating the contaminant.

13. The filter system of claim 12 wherein the material includes an anti-microbial agent.

14. A method for operating a filter system including the steps of:

- a) advancing clean filter media into a channel through which a fluid passes;
- b) collecting contaminants from the fluid in the filter media in the channel; and
- c) advancing the filter media with the contaminants from the channel to a container adjacent the channel.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein said steps a) and c) are performed based upon time.

16. The method of claim 14 wherein said steps a) and c) are performed based upon information from at least one sensor.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein said steps a) and c) are performed based upon information from at least one pressure sensor.

18. The method of claim 14 wherein said steps a) and c) are performed simultaneously.

19. The method of claim 14 further including the step of:

- removing the sealed container containing filter media with contaminants and placing a new, empty sealed container adjacent the channel.

20. The method of claim 14 further including the step of dispensing an anti-microbial material into the container to treat the filter media with contaminants.